



Dancing on the White Page: Black Women Entertainers Writing Autobiography (SUNY series, Cultural Studies in Cinema/Video)

Kwakiutl L. Dreher

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Investigates the literary voices of six Black women entertainers and how they negotiated the tensions between the entertainment industries and the Black community.

Dancing on the White Page examines the popular autobiographies of six well-known Black women entertainers—Diahann Carroll, Dorothy Dandridge, Lena Horne, Eartha Kitt, Whoopi Goldberg, and Mary Wilson—and makes a case for adding Black celebrity autobiography to the African American literary canon. As she explores these women’s fascinating stories, Kwakiutl L. Dreher reveals how each one improvises the choreography of her life to survive and thrive in the film, television, and music industries, as well as the politically charged environment of the Black community, most specifically represented by the NAACP. Reading each autobiography as a site of self-revelation, Dreher discovers stories of Black self-determination along with the fight for liberation from oppression and racial and gender discrimination. She explores each woman’s full meaning in American culture at large and in American entertainment culture in particular.

Kwakiutl L. Dreher is Associate Professor of English and Ethnic Studies at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln.

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